

Further contemporary evidence is not lacking that the knights of t̃jba shire were alone considered important from a political point of view. Thus when Richard the Second packed his Parliament of 1397, through the agency of the Sheriffs, he only concerned himself about the county, and not the town members. Langland (*Rich. Itedeless*, passus iv. 627. Skeat):—

(The King) * sente side sondis (wide messages) to
schreuis aboute,
To chese swich cheualleries as the charge wold.
To schewe ffor the schire in company with the grete.
And whanne it drowe to the day of the dede-doyng,
That sovereignes were semblid and the schire-knytis ;
Than, as her (their) fforme is, frist they beginne to
declare

The cause of her comynge and than the kyngis will.'

It is only some lines later that the town members are mentioned, and then as qxiite a distinct body from the knights.

' A morwe thei must, affore meti to-gedir,
The knytis of the comunete and carpe of
the maters With citiseyrie of shiris ysent
ffor the same.'

Stubbs, ii. 540, supports this view. Though he does not refer in the footnote to the original authorities from which he formed the conclusion, it is clearly the result of all his enormous research work in the authorities bhat concern the later Middle Ages.

My contention is, not that the burghers took no part in the business of Parliament, for they sent up such petitions as concerned themselves, but that they took no important share in the policy of attacking ministers, appointing councils of state, &c., which the Commons carried out in the next ten years.

Note 3, p. 15

We may indeed be led slightly to exaggerate the unanimity of the Commons, owing to the omission of all minority-protests from the. Rolls of Parliament, but the opposition to the general sense of the House* must have been very small, seeing that it has not found its way into the chronicles, or any other unofficial records of the time.

The only record of a minority-protest against the general sense of the House is in *Chron. Ang.*, 112, where the protest is made in favour of the policy of the Good Parliament and of most other parliaments, against the unusual policy of that particular Parliament of 1377, which assembly John of G-aunt had packed. This, therefore, is the exception that proves the rule.

Note 4, p. 29

Chron. Any., 98-100; *Gesta Abbatum S. Alb.*, iii. 230^2 ; *Rot. ParL*, ii. 329 ; Bishop Stubbs (ii. 452) says :—' Under a general ordinance against all owing women to practise in the courts of law, they obtained an award of banishment and forfeiture ' against Alice Perrers. If this means that her goods were at this time forfeited, it is incorrect. It was only pro-